

**Early Childhood Longitudinal Study,
Birth Cohort: Combined Kindergarten-
1st Grade Field Test
(ECLS-B, K-1 Field Test)
Field Test Report #1**

**Field Staff Hiring, Training, and
Home Data Collection**

March 2006

Project No. 08116.013

Karen Morgan

Conducted by
RTI International
P.O. Box 12194
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

**Early Childhood Longitudinal Study,
Birth Cohort: Combined Kindergarten-
1st Grade Field Test
(ECLS-B, K-1 Field Test)
Field Test Report #1**

**Field Staff Hiring, Training,
and Home Data Collection**

May 2006

Project No. 08116.013

Karen Morgan

Conducted by

RTI International
P.O. Box 12194
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

Table of Contents

1	Field Interviewer Hiring	1
1.1.	Overview of Staffing Pattern	1
1.2.	Field Interviewer Hiring	1
1.3.	Recommendations for the National Study Regarding Field Staff Hiring	2
2	Field Interviewer Training Procedures, Agenda, and Outcome	2
2.1.	Training Preparations	2
2.2.	Training Field Interviewers (FIs)	2
2.2.1.	Child Assessment Training	3
2.2.2.	Teacher Survey Training	3
2.3.	Training Outcome	4
2.4.	Recommendations for the National Study FI Training	4
3	Sample Composition	5
4	Data Collection During Home Visits	7
4.1.	Overview of Home Visit Data Collection	7
4.1.1.	Home Visit Procedures	7
4.1.1.1.	Home Visit Procedures	7
4.1.1.2.	Field Interviewer Contact with Families in the Longitudinal Sample	8
4.1.1.3.	Field Interviewer Contact with Families in the Supplemental Sample	9
4.1.1.4.	Longitudinal Sample Home Data Collection	9
4.1.1.5.	Supplemental Sample Home Data Collection	10
4.1.1.6.	Home Visit for Families with Twins	10
4.1.2.	Documenting and Reporting Procedures	10
4.2.	Parental Response to the Teacher Contact Request	11
4.3.	School Identification Procedure in Parent Interview	11
4.4.	Recommendations for the National Study Teacher Contact Consenting Process	11
5	Field Costs	12
6	Completion Rates	12
7	Data Quality Control Procedures	14
7.1.	Telephone Verifications	14
7.2.	Timer Data Reports	14
7.3.	Recommendations for the National Study	15
	Attachment 1: Training Agenda	16
	Attachment 2: ECLS-B K-1 Field Test Permission to Contact Teacher Form	21

Exhibits

Exhibit 1. Revised selection strata for the kindergarten cohort of the K-1 Field Test	6
Exhibit 2. Combined kindergarten and first-grade samples.....	7

Tables

Table 1. Average and target hours, miles, and expenses per completion	12
Table 2. K-1 Field Test parent interview completion rates	13
Table 3. Parental cooperation rate to contact child’s teacher	13
Table 4. Parent verification cases	14
Table 5. Parent interview length	15
Table 6. Child assessment length.....	16

Field Staff Hiring, Training, and Home Data Collection

1. Field Interviewer Hiring

1.1 Overview of Staffing Pattern

The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study—Birth Cohort Combined Kindergarten-1st Grade (ECLS-B K-1) Field Test was conducted in the Fall of 2005 (September – December) and was much smaller in scale than the ECLS-B Preschool Field Test. The K-1 Field Test had two main goals. The first was to test items to be used to in the development of the cognitive assessment. The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten class (ECLS-K) kindergarten assessment will be modified for the upcoming kindergarten round of the ECLS-B and the field test items will be used to create a new lowest level as well as to increase the entire range of the cognitive assessment by adding more difficult items. Second, a variety of school data collection activities were to be tested as the kindergarten round is the first round in the ECLS-B in which teacher and school participation is required. Moreover, unlike the ECLS-K, it is expected that there may be only one child per school. It was determined that data collected on 300 children would be sufficient to meet these goals.

The Longitudinal sample was drawn from eight Primary Sampling Units (PSUs). Then, to provide greater opportunity to test the school contacting and teacher survey procedures, the sample was supplemented with older children enrolled in both kindergarten and first grade. With an anticipated 323 cases¹ spread across eight PSUs, the agreed-upon staffing plan was to hire a single field interviewer (FI) for each PSU. Then, to provide backup in case a field interviewer was unable to complete his or her assignment, two additional field interviewers were hired who would be willing to travel if necessary. RTI International* recruited a single field supervisor (FS) who was hired on June 10, 2005 for the ECLS-B K-1 Field Test. This FS, selected from a pool of FSs recommended by other RTI staff, was experienced in both interviewing and supervising.

1.2 Field Interviewer Hiring

The FS began recruiting FIs immediately after she was hired, giving preference to those interviewers who had demonstrated proficiency on similar studies in the past, such as previous rounds of the ECLS-B or the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Cohort (ECLS-K). Any interviewer candidates not known to the FS or to RTI project staff were interviewed for the position by the FS and their references were contacted for reports on past work performance. In addition, any interviewer candidates who had not recently worked for RTI had their backgrounds checked by Headway Staffing Services for both misdemeanor and felony convictions and to make sure they had valid driver's licenses and were in compliance with the Motor Vehicle Policy. Just prior to completion of hiring, the FS was temporarily replaced due to

¹ Due to a significant number of cases that had moved out of the interviewing area or could not be located, an additional 21 cases were added to the sample during data collection to ensure the required number of completed child assessments was obtained.

* RTI International is a trade name of Research Triangle Institute.

hurricane-related personal hardship. She rejoined the project on October 27, 2005 when her replacement resigned for personal reasons.

Of the 10 interviewers recruited, nine were trained. The person designated as the main traveler withdrew the day before training was to begin. All nine who were trained were certified and cleared for fieldwork. However, one resigned due to personal reasons upon returning home; coincidentally, an FI who worked on the ECLS-B Preschool Field Test became available shortly thereafter and was hired as the replacement for that PSU. Because of her familiarity with the project and with administrative procedures and systems, she had a condensed 2-day training focusing on the revised child assessment and the request for teacher contact and was certified on all tasks.

All field staff, including the FS, was hired through Headway Staffing Services, a temporary staffing agency that handles all administrative and payroll functions associated with the FIs' and FSs' employment.

1.3 Recommendations for the National Study Regarding Field Staff Hiring

Hiring practices were successful. There are no recommendations for changes to the hiring protocol.

2. Field Interviewer Training Procedures, Agenda, and Outcome

2.1 Training Preparations

In the months preceding the FI training session, ECLS-B Field Test project staff developed training materials, including a detailed FI manual, training guide, and scripted mock exercises designed to give FI trainees hands-on experience with the data collection process and procedures. In addition, a videotape of a complete child assessment was made. Given the small scope of the K-1 Field Test, a single training room could accommodate all trainees. Therefore, there was no need for a training session for trainers. The project staff responsible for developing specific training modules also served as the trainer for those modules.

A combination of preclassroom home study, classroom-based training, and postclassroom home study was used to prepare FIs to work on the ECLS-B K-1 Field Test. Prior to attending the centralized classroom-based training, all FIs received a copy of the FI manual and a home-study exercise. They were given 8 hours to review the manual and complete the home-study exercise. This exercise was graded, and the FS provided feedback to the FIs on their scores and on items they answered incorrectly. In addition to the home-study exercise, FIs were also required to complete a home training on human subjects' protection issues. They could not begin the interviewer training without first passing this home training. This preparatory work allowed FIs to arrive at the classroom-based training with a better understanding of the objectives and requirements of the project.

2.2 Training FIs

The ECLS-B K-1 Field Test training was conducted September 21 through September 24, 2005. Because the field test involved a very short parent CAPI instrument and only the cognitive and gross motor parts of the child assessment, only four days was needed (as opposed

to seven for the Preschool Field Test). The training took advantage of the insights gained from the Preschool Field Test and was patterned to a large extent after the current ECLS-B Preschool Round training. The only truly new aspect of the field interviewer training was the introduction of the teacher survey. The cognitive assessments included new items, but methods for effective training had already been established. The training agenda is shown in *Attachment 1*.

Training consisted of a combination of lecture portions, interactive portions, and mock interviews. It covered all aspects of fieldwork including general principles of field interviewing, such as gaining cooperation, as well as specific training on administration of the child assessment and the parent interview. It also included training on the necessary administrative tasks such as managing case loads, safeguarding and transmitting data, and completing administrative and reporting tasks. On the second and third nights of the training, an evening study hall was held. Multiple trainers were on hand during the study hall to help answer questions and guide FIs in their study and practice. This provided opportunities for FIs to receive additional training and practice with specific activities.

2.2.1 Child Assessment Training. Administration of the child assessment was the key reason for the home visit and every effort was made to ensure that the FIs were adequately prepared to handle the assessment setting as well as the instruments themselves. The child assessment training began with an orientation to interacting with children, including how to establish rapport, pace the assessment, and offer neutral praise. The trainer then provided background instruction on the instrument and demonstrated the administration of each item. Structured round-robin interviews followed with the trainer acting as the study participant and interviewers performing the assessment administration activities for demonstration purposes. Paired mock assessments were also conducted. These paired mocks gave the FIs a better understanding and comfort with the assessments by allowing them hands-on practice time administering the assessment activities, with trainers monitoring and answering questions as needed. Additionally, a video that demonstrated proper administration of the assessments with a child was shown, and key concepts were highlighted and reviewed.

2.2.2 Teacher Survey Training. Because contact with the child's teacher was being added to the data collection activities for the first time in the kindergarten round, the training module on the teacher survey had to be developed from scratch. First, FIs were provided with an overview of the teacher survey including the critical nature of its role in evaluating school readiness. Then, to equip them with the ability to describe the study and respond to parental questions, the FIs were informed about the nature of the teacher's participation—the content of the questions, the voluntary nature of the teacher's participation, the amount of time involved, and the gift card provided in appreciation. Once they had an understanding of the teacher survey component, the FI's role in the success of the teacher survey was discussed. Even though the FIs were not directly responsible for collecting the teacher data and would never have any contact with the teacher, the FIs were made to understand that they were the critical first step to gaining the teacher data. Without their ability to effectively describe the teacher survey to the parent and gain parental consent for this contact, a key part of the study would fail. A flowchart that visually portrayed the necessary steps to be taken to obtain a completed teacher questionnaire placed the FIs at the top of the list. Next, the "Permission to Contact Teacher" form was read aloud and discussed (see Attachment 2). The importance of an accurately completed form was stressed. Lastly, the disposition of the various copies of the permission form was explained, especially the

importance of the timely return of the signed copies to be included in the teacher questionnaire packet.

2.3 Training Outcome

Certification is designed as a means to ensure that FIs are well prepared to complete their assignments. As such, FIs were required to demonstrate their proficiency with a number of key data collection tasks, including

- conduct of assessments;
- ability to trace respondents; and
- use of the computer to conduct interviews and enter status codes and to access the Case Management System (CMS) to receive and transmit data.

At the end of training, FIs were evaluated based on how they performed on each task and how prepared they were to begin their field assignment.

The final afternoon of training was designated for the certification tests. By that point, each FI had to have demonstrated proficiency in all of the above tasks in order to receive a case assignment and begin work. Given the critical importance of an accurately-administered child assessment, the newness of an assessment administration of this nature for some FIs, and the difficulty in providing long-distance remedial assistance once an FI returned home, FIs were given the opportunity to attempt the Child Assessment certification at the end of Day 3, as well. If there was a problem, the FI could come to study hall that evening and have additional instruction. Knowing they had more than one opportunity to pass the assessment certification was also reassuring to FIs with high test anxiety.

Of the nine FIs trained, all nine were certified at the training session. In fact, all nine had passed the child assessment certification by the end of Day 3 and were given case assignments prior to departure.

2.4 Recommendations for National Study FI Training

The K-1 Field Test FI training effectively prepared FIs for their work. Based upon observation of the FIs and the questions they had, the following recommendations should be considered for the national study.

- For a few of the pattern awareness items, i.e. MATPR02 (M-I-PRACT-PA-P34), MAT036 (M-I-PA-34) and MAT039 (M-I-PA-35), provide an additional reference sheet with several less obvious or clear-cut examples of accurate and/or inaccurate placement of the pieces. An instructional aid of this nature would be useful not only during training but also in the field to help maintain the reliability of the scoring. One such situation involved the child placing her pieces parallel to the FI's pieces. Such a tool may also be useful for some of the counting items, for example MAT045 (M-K-CO-99).
- For the field test training, a handout of appropriate and inappropriate ways to praise a child was developed. The concept of non-evaluative praise can be a difficult one to grasp. If FIs have something concrete to refer to during training, they can develop the

appropriate behavior before going to the field. The field test FIs appreciated this guide.

- Maintain the option for at least two opportunities to pass the child assessment certifications during the course of training. Also, shifting one or more of the administrative-type certifications to earlier in the training would help relieve some of the pressure on that last day, providing more opportunity for remedial work with those who may need it.
- The training on the teacher survey seemed to work well. The parental consent rate from the K-1 Field Test was over 99 percent, and the forms (with only a few exceptions) were correctly completed. Motivating the FIs by acknowledging their critical role in gaining the parental consent will be important.
- Make sure to leave adequate time for administrative procedures instruction, especially for time sheet and e-mail instruction. Although long-distance assistance in these areas can be provided, incorrectly filed paperwork is time consuming and an inadequate ability to communicate via e-mail is a risk.
- Regarding data handling and communications, for the kindergarten rounds of the National Study, FIs should be trained in accordance with the National Preschool Round procedures now in place.

3. Sample Composition

The K-1 Field Test sample came from two sources: the existing field test sample and a small newly recruited sample. The existing field test sample for ECLS-B consisted of 1,247 families who participated in the preschool field test. Roughly half of these had been in the field test sample since the 9-month field test; the other half was recruited specifically for the preschool field test. From these, we selected 229 cases for the K-1 Field Test. These cases were referred to as the “K-1 Field Test longitudinal sample.” *Exhibit 1* shows the types of children selected from this sample in order that children likely to be at the lower end of the range of functioning (*i.e.*, the very low birth weight [VLBW] children and those born in the last months of 2000) were represented to the same extent as those at a higher level of functioning (*i.e.*, those born earlier in 2000 and/or enrolled in kindergarten).

Exhibit 1. Revised selection strata for the kindergarten cohort of the K-1 Field Test

Strata	Dates of Birth	Number Selected	Home Visits Completed
Very low birth weight (VLBW) children from the original field test longitudinal sample	January to March 2000	16	15
Non-VLBW children from the original field test longitudinal sample or preschool supplemental sample	January to March 2000	104	79
Very low birth weight (VLBW) children from the original field test longitudinal sample	April 2000	2	2
Non-VLBW children from the original field test longitudinal sample or preschool supplemental sample	April 2000	11	11
Children from the preschool supplemental sample	April to June 2000	15	13
Children from the preschool supplemental sample	July to September 2000	38	33
Children from the preschool supplemental sample	October to December 2000	43	38
Newly recruited sample of kindergartners	1999	—	39

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), 9-month National Data Collection, Preschool Field Test, and Combined Kindergarten-1st Grade Field Test.

In selecting the cases from the existing ECLS-B Field Test sample, eight of the 17 field test Primary Sampling Units (PSUs) were chosen in which to work (Denver, CO; Fredericksburg/Reston/DC; St. Paul, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; Philadelphia, PA; Greenville, SC; North Austin, TX; and Lumberton, NC). These were selected to represent a variety of regions of the country, both urban and rural areas, and different types of school districts.

This sample was supplemented with a newly-recruited sample of kindergartners who were born in 1999. These children were older than those in the existing field test sample and enhanced our ability to assess the school recruitment and teacher data collection methodology. Also, this sample was needed to mirror the national sample in 2007 in which there will be a group of children who are older but enrolled in kindergarten for the first time (due to delayed kindergarten entry or a late birthday). Newspaper advertisements were run in the same eight PSUs from which the longitudinal sample was drawn, asking interested parents of kindergartners to call a toll-free number to enroll in the study. Callers completed a brief screening questionnaire to collect the date of birth of the child and to confirm that child was enrolled in kindergarten and that both the parent and child spoke English.

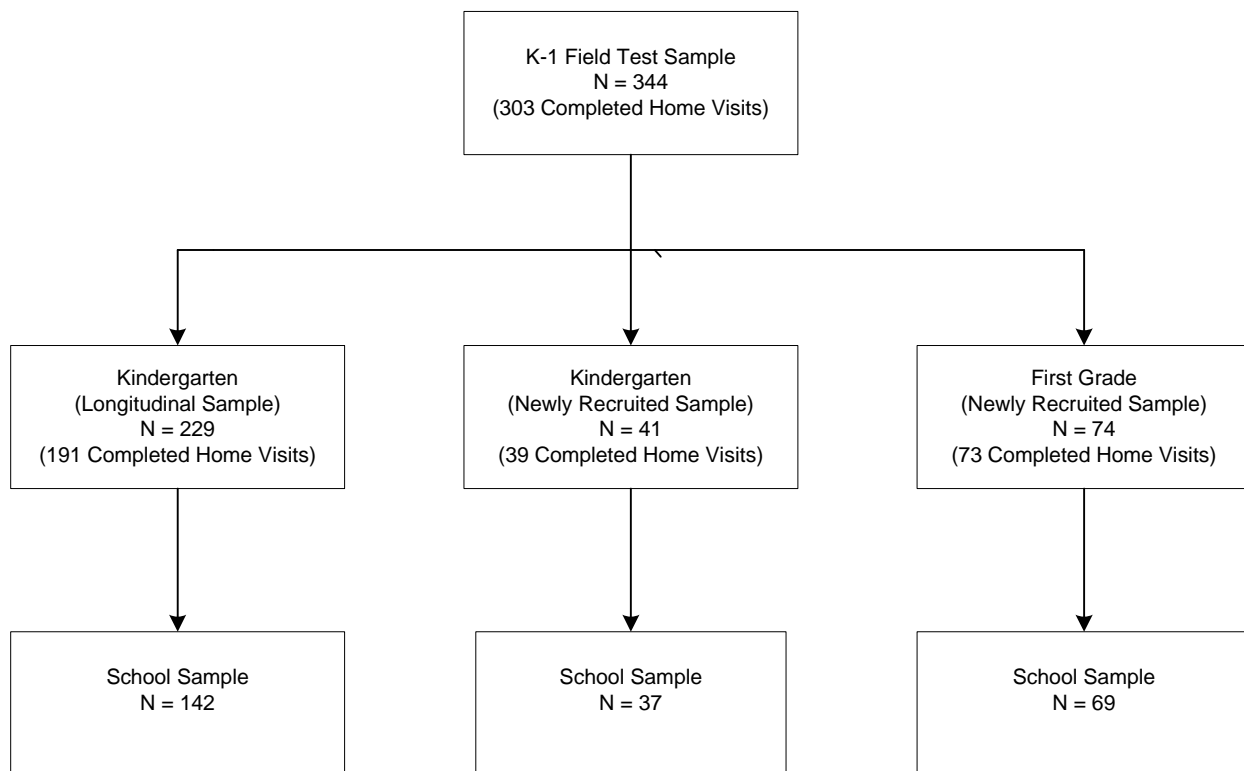
First-grade cases born in 1999 were also newly recruited for the field test. The recruitment of this sample happened concurrently with recruitment of the supplemental kindergarten sample and followed the same protocol.

The original sampling plan called for a smaller sample from the longitudinal sample of children with January to March 2000 birthdates. This number was increased during the field test

period in order to include additional older children in the sample, due to difficulties in recruiting the supplemental sample of cases. The proportion of first-graders was also reduced because the 1st grade data collection was dropped in favor of a second kindergarten wave, to be fielded in Fall 2007.

Exhibit 2 presents a graphic of the combined kindergarten and first-grade samples.

Exhibit 2. Combined kindergarten and first-grade samples



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), 9-month National Data Collection, Preschool Field Test, and Combined Kindergarten-1st Grade Field Test.

4. Data Collection During In-Home Visits

4.1 Overview of Home Visit Data Collection

4.1.1 Home Visit Procedures. Data collection for the in-home visits started on September 25, 2005. These visits were completed by December 3, 2005. The following sections describe specific field procedures that were followed by the field supervisor and field interviewers responsible for the in-home visits.

4.1.1.1 Case Assignment

Cases fell into two categories: longitudinal and supplemental. Although the initial contact with the two types of families varied somewhat, all cases were administered the same procedures. That is, all parents received the same short CAPI interview and the cognitive and

gross motor assessments were administered to every child. At the end of training, the FS made the first caseload assignment to each certified FI. Cases were assigned somewhat on a flow basis because supplemental sample recruitment was still in progress. As the field period progressed, it became clear that the number of supplemental cases would be insufficient, and also that a larger than anticipated number of longitudinal cases had moved out of the interviewing area. Additional longitudinal cases were added to assure an adequate number of cases to meet the requirements for the child assessment analyses.

For each case, regardless of sample type, the field interviewer received a case folder containing a case information sheet showing

- sample type;
- identification (ID) numbers and names of the family members to be located and interviewed; and
- family's last known address and telephone number.

For the longitudinal sample cases, the case information sheet also included

- interview/assessment status from previous round of the survey;
- information on the resident father; and
- names and contact information of contact persons named in previous interviews.

In addition to the case information sheet, longitudinal sample cases had an address history sheet that provided field interviewers with a history of addresses associated with a case. This included old and new addresses for the respondent and addresses and phone numbers of the respondent's contacts mentioned in previous rounds. The field interviewers used this sheet if the contact information from the case information sheet was inaccurate. A personalized lead letter to the family was also provided in the folders for the longitudinal cases. The field interviewer mailed this letter before beginning work on the case. All case folders contained a set of bar-coded ID labels that were to be attached to all forms to be completed (such as the consent forms) and sent to RTI. Also, field interviewers were provided with a Record of Actions (ROA) form on which they recorded all contacts and attempted contacts with the family.

4.1.1.2 Field Interviewer Contact with Families in the Longitudinal Sample

After the lead letter was sent, the next contact with households in the longitudinal sample was made by telephone if the field interviewer had a working telephone number for the family. Field interviewers were provided with a suggested script for the initial call, although they were not required to read the script verbatim. All field interviewers were trained to present themselves professionally and were required to cover certain key points of the scripted introduction. However, they were allowed to adapt the specific wording of the script to their own style. For example, if the field interviewer visited the family during the previous round of the study and established a strong rapport with the parent, the field interviewer's introduction may have had a more familiar tone to it than if he or she had never met the family before.

First contact was made in person if the field interviewer happened to be in close proximity to the address while working another case in the area and the additional travel time to

the address would be minimal. Also, in-person first contact was made in instances in which the family did not have a telephone or no telephone number was available.

If a sample family moved outside of the primary sampling unit (PSU) and lived more than 75 miles from the field interviewer, the field interviewer contacted the field supervisor who, after confirmation of the distance, coded the family as having moved out of the interviewing area. The K-1 Field Test made no provisions for conducting the parent interview by telephone given that the purpose of the data collection was to complete the child assessment and obtain the parent's consent and signature on the consent form to permit teacher contact.

4.1.1.3 Field Interviewer Contact with Families in the Supplemental Sample

Families in the supplemental sample contacted RTI voluntarily to participate in the study. Consequently, the field interviewers' first contact with the supplemental sample members resulted in very few refusals and locating problems were minimal. As with the longitudinal sample, first contact was made by telephone to set up an appointment with the family.

4.1.1.4 Longitudinal Sample Home Data Collection

The data collection period was only 10 weeks long; therefore, it was important that all cases be worked immediately. Timely first contact was necessary to ensure adequate time for refusal conversion or tracing activities.

Before starting the interview for a longitudinal case, the field interviewer first determined if the sample child was living with the same parent respondent from the previous round. A Parent/Caregiver Verification and Update Form directed the field interviewer in the verification process. If it was determined that the current caregiver was interviewed as the parent respondent in the previous round, then the interview could begin. If it was determined that the child's current caregiver was different from the parent respondent in the previous round, the field interviewer filled out the form and updated the new respondent's information in the front section on the parent interview. Then consent for the child's participation was requested of the current caregiver.

Interviewers were instructed to begin with the Parent CAPI. It was short and gave the child an opportunity to get accustomed to the interviewer in the home. Afterwards, the child assessment was completed. However, the Child Capacity for Assessment had to be administered before the child assessment could be administered. If the parent's responses indicated that the child had severe limitations, one or more of the child components was not administered. Interviewers could use then their discretion about the order of the remaining instruments. If, for example, the child began to fatigue or became restless, they could switch from the cognitive assessment to the gross motor items and then return to the cognitive assessment. Allowing for flexibility, the preferred order of administration was as follows:

1. parent interview;
2. Child Capacity for Assessment instrument (completed prior to any child activities);
3. cognitive assessment (math and language, order of presentation randomly assigned);
and
4. gross motor skills.

At the end of the CAPI, if the child was in kindergarten or first grade, field interviewers were prompted to obtain consent to contact the child's teacher. The script they used to obtain consent was provided in the CAPI. The field interviewer then presented the consent form. Once the parent signed the consent form, the field interviewer recorded in the CAPI instrument the name of the teacher, the school, the school administrator's name, the address, and the telephone number. The field interviewer mailed two of the four copies of the signed consent form to RTI via overnight delivery service within 48 hours of the completion of the interview, placed one copy in the case folder, and gave the remaining copy to the parent.

At the end of the interview, field interviewers were prompted by the CAPI to give the parent the incentive for participating in the interview. This was the last formal activity the field interviewer conducted in the home. The parent signed a receipt form acknowledging payment. The payment to the parent respondent in the longitudinal sample with a single study child was \$30. Parents of twins were paid \$60. Each child received a book as an incentive.

4.1.1.5 Supplemental Sample In-home Data Collection

Once in the household, field interviewers completed the CAPI instrument with the supplemental sample parent to capture demographic information about the family and child. This was the same instrument administered to the longitudinal sample parent. The relevant components of the Child Capacity for Assessment instrument were completed, followed by the cognitive assessment and gross motor assessment. An incentive of \$50 was paid to the parent upon completion of the assessment. Each child received a book as an incentive.

4.1.1.6 Home Visit for Families with Twins

The procedure for home visits for families with sampled twins was similar to other home visits. However, because many procedures were completed with both twins, the home visit was substantially longer than for non-twin households. When scheduling families of twins, field interviewers informed the parents of the expected length of the visit and the need to keep the second twin from observing his or her sibling's assessment.

4.1.2 Documenting and Reporting Procedures. Field interviewers had to follow several important steps to be sure they thoroughly and accurately documented their work. They had to

- document all actions taken on a case on the hard-copy Record of Action (ROA) forms;
- update event codes and case comments daily in the Case Management System (CMS) on their laptop computers;
- transmit data from completed cases, as well as updated event codes and notes, to RTI the evening of each working day;
- ship teacher consent forms and child booklets to RTI via overnight delivery service no later than the day after the in-home visit (RTI's Data Capture Department received these materials and logged them into the RTI receipt control system.); and
- maintain a case folder containing all hard-copy forms associated with each case set (sampled child and associated parent) in their case assignment.

When both the parent interview and child assessment for a case set were finalized, the field interviewer sent the case folder containing the completed ROAs, consent forms, and other hard-copy forms to the field supervisor. As part of the shipment, they completed a Case Folder Inventory Sheet listing the forms included in the folder.

In addition to the documenting and reporting activities above, the field interviewers had weekly telephone conference calls with the supervisor. During the calls, field interviewers reported the most up-to-date status of each case, including all potential noninterview cases, focusing on refusals, unlocatables, and sampled persons who were unavailable after repeated attempts. In these calls, the supervisor provided the field interviewers with strategies to gain cooperation and minimize refusals. Also, compliance with study protocol was reviewed as necessary. Permission forms and child assessment booklets were returned in a timely fashion by all FIs but a few FIs did not transmit as frequently as protocol dictated.

4.2 Parental Response to the Teacher Contact Request

As mentioned above, the field interviewer, when prompted by the CAPI instrument, would explain the purpose for contacting children's teachers and what would be involved on the teacher's part. They would ask the parent to sign the four-part hard copy Permission to Contact Teacher form and answer any questions the parent might have. This process was very successful. Only two of 250 parents refused to consent for a refusal rate of less than 1 percent. There were no problems reported with the parental consent form regarding what information was needed and on what line it should be placed.

4.3 School Identification Procedure in the Parent Interview

Once the teacher survey component had been explained and the parental consent form signed, the interviewer would gather the information necessary to contact the teacher and the school principal or head administrator. The majority of parents were able to furnish the first and last names of the teacher. But a significant number only knew the teacher's last name (25 percent) and some (6 percent) only knew the teacher's first name. Even fewer knew the principal's name. Almost 10 percent of parents had no idea what the principal's name was, 3 percent reported only the principal's first name, and 24 percent reported only the principal's last name.

One extremely useful tool that was programmed into the CAPI was a lookup table for the school name. The school names and addresses from the NCES database were preloaded for the geographic areas included in the sampled PSUs. The field interviewer only needed to start typing the school name in, and a short list of possible matches came up. From there, the field interviewer could confirm the school name and the associated address with the parent. This dramatically increased the accuracy of the spelling of the school name and provided the mailing address at the same time. If the school was not included in the lookup table, which was much more likely for a private school, the field interviewer could select the "NOT FOUND" option and enter the school name and address in the text boxes provided.

4.4 Recommendations for the National Study Teacher Contact Consenting Process

The few recommendations for the national study are as follows:

- The disposition of the various copies of the teacher consent form need to be added to the bottom of the form so the field interviewers remain clear about which color copy is left with the parent, which copies are sent in immediately to RTI via overnight mail service, and which copy remains in the case folder.
- The school contacting calls (to be discussed further in Field Report #2) are necessary and should be continued. The difficulty parents had with the teacher names points to the importance of having the opportunity to verify these names before attempting to mail out the questionnaire packets. Address labels are part of the first impression the ECLS-B packet will make. Accurately spelled names increase the impression of professionalism with which the recipient will regard our request for teacher participation.
- Given the difficulty parents had providing the principal name and the fact that the school contacting calls (during which teacher names would be confirmed) would be made after the informational packet is scheduled to be mailed, we recommend addressing the informational packet to “Principal” at [NAME OF SCHOOL].
- The lookup table will require the addition of at least one filter to increase the speed with which the correct school can be found when the schools in almost every state are included. The field interviewer will most likely be asked to input the respondent’s state so that the schools in that state only are included in the subsequent steps taken to identify the correct school.
- The data handling and communications procedures now in place for the National Preschool Round should be followed for the kindergarten rounds, as well.

5. Field Costs

Table 1 provides the average field interviewer hours, miles, and expenses to complete a parent interview and child assessment for the K-1 Field Test. The average time to complete both the parent and child components was 4.92 hours. At least two factors contributed to the reduced hours per completed interview. First, many of the younger children skipped out of a portion of the assessment. Also, the amount of time spent tracing was held to a minimum.

Table 1. Average and target hours, miles, and expenses per complete

	Average per complete					
	Hours		Miles		Expenses ¹ (\$)	
	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target
Completed parent-child case	4.92	6.25	60.54	100.00	69.00	97.70

¹ Expenses include incentives paid to respondents, mileage, plus other miscellaneous expenses (i.e., maps, stamps, etc.).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), Combined Kindergarten-1st Grade Field Test.

6. Completion Rates

The tables below show the final disposition of cases for the K-1 Field Test. A case is considered complete if the respondent completed an interview or assessment. For parent

respondents, this meant completing the entire parent interview. For children, this meant completing the entire cognitive child assessment.

Other final disposition codes include “unlocatables,” “refusals,” and “others.” “Unlocatables” are cases for which a respondent could not be located after repeated locating attempts by the interviewer. “Refusals” are cases for which the parent refused to participate in the study. For child assessments, “refusals” are cases for which a legal guardian (usually the parent) did not allow the child to be assessed. Cases with a final disposition of “other” include respondents who were unavailable after repeated attempts during the data collection period or who moved out of the interviewing area.

Table 2 shows completion rates for the parent CAPI cases. Eighty-eight percent completed the parent interview. About 3 percent of the cases were unlocatable. The refusal rate was 2 percent.

Table 2. K-1 Field Test Parent interview completion rates

	Number	Percent
Total	335	100
Complete	296	88
Unlocatable	9	3
Refusal	7	2
Other ¹	23	7

¹ Other includes “no one home after repeated attempts,” “unavailable after repeated attempts,” and “moved out of interviewing area.”

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), Combined Kindergarten-1st Grade Field Test.

Before RTI initiated the school contacting and teacher survey process, interviewers first had to obtain the parent respondents’ consent to contact the teacher. Parents were asked the question: “Will you give your written permission for me to contact [CHILD]’s teacher?” **Table 3** shows the distribution of the responses to this question. Most parents (99 percent) gave the interviewer their written permission to contact their child’s teacher.

Table 3. Parental cooperation rate to contact child’s teacher

Permission granted	N	Percent
Total	250	100.0
Yes	248	99.2
No	2	0.8

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), Combined Kindergarten-1st Grade Field Test.

7. Data Quality Control Procedures

During data collection for the ECLS-B K-1 Field Test, several data quality control procedures were used. These procedures included making verification calls to the parent, reviewing timer data reports, and reviewing various other reports. Each of these quality control methods is described in more detail in the following sections.

7.1 Telephone Verifications

Telephone calls to respondents were used to verify parent interviews. The parent telephone verifications involved contacting the parent respondent to verify that the field interviewer conducted the parent interview and the child assessments, followed project protocol, and provided the correct incentive amount. Given the size of the field study, RTI project staff conducted the verification calls rather than having call center staff conduct them. This eliminated the need for programming the verification instrument and training telephone interviewers.

At least three completed parent cases were verified for each field interviewer. Of the 39 cases attempted, 35 cases (89.7 percent) were verified, and 4 cases (10.3 percent) were unable to be verified. The four cases were unable to be verified for one of the following reasons:

- the phone number was disconnected (one of the four or 25 percent);
- the phone was always answered by an answering machine (two of the four or 50 percent); or
- the respondent did not have time and then there was no answer on other tries (one of four or 25 percent).

Table 4 provides details regarding the selection and disposition of the parent verification cases.

Table 4. Parent verification cases

Parent interviews	Selected for verification	Percent selected	Verified interviews	Verification response rate	Incomplete verification	Percent incomplete cases
296	39	11.8	35	89.7%	4	10.3

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), Combined Kindergarten-1st Grade Field Test.

7.2 Timer Data Reports

In addition to the verification procedures used to monitor data quality for the K-1 Field Test, various timer reports were generated and reviewed weekly. These timer reports listed the time the field interviewer spent in the sections of the various instruments, time spent at the main menu screen, and the total time of each interview or assessment. These reports were used to monitor the parent interviews and child assessments.

Timer reports that were generated each week provided information on an individual case level and a project level. These figures could also be calculated on a field interviewer level. Timer report information included

- ID of the field interviewer who completed the case;

- total time for each interview;
- time per component, or section;
- project-wide median time; and
- project-wide average time.

This information was tabulated each week for all interviews completed to date. The total time per interview included the time spent entering the data at each individual section as well as the time spent at the main menu screen. Individual component time included only the time spent in a specific instrument section.

Timer reports were reviewed weekly at both an individual case level and a field interviewer level, monitoring for cases completed in significantly less or more time than the project median, and for field interviewers whose median times (for all their completed interviews) were significantly more or less than the project median times. While five cases were investigated, no serious problems were discovered.

The parent timer report captured timer data for the parent interview. **Table 5** provides the mean and median time of the parent interviews, as well as the inter-quartile range.

Table 5. Parent interview length

Parent interviews			
N	Mean time (in minutes)	Median time (in minutes)	Inter-quartile range
296	9.23	8.64	5.32

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), Combined Kindergarten-1st Grade Field Test.

The child assessment timer report captured timer data for child assessments. **Table 6** provides both the mean and median time of the child assessment, as well as the inter-quartile range. Many children were routed out of the harder items, lowering the average time of assessment.

Table 6. Child assessment length

Child Assessment Cases			
N	Mean time (in minutes)	Median time (in minutes)	Inter-quartile range
303	28.92	27.70	9.91

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), Combined Kindergarten-1st Grade Field Test.

7.3 Recommendations for the National Study

No changes in field procedures relating to data quality are recommended for the national study.

Attachment 1
ECLS–B K-1 Field Test Field Interviewer Training Agenda

DAY 1		
TIME	ACTIVITY	LENGTH
8:30 a.m.	Welcome/introductions to classroom group (<u>module 1.0</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the certification process 	10 minutes
8:40 a.m.	Purpose and background of ECLS-B K-1 Field Test and overall data collection design (<u>module 1.1</u>)	20 minutes
9:00 a.m.	Study time schedule (<u>module 1.2</u>)	10 minutes
9:10 a.m.	Summary of field interviewer duties (<u>module 1.3</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of FI responsibilities 	20 minutes
9:30 a.m.	Review of data collection forms (<u>module 1.4</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of lead letters, brochure, etc. 	15 minutes
9:45 a.m.	Event codes (<u>module 1.5</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interactive review of codes (FIs help read code descriptions and usage) Group “quiz” – class provided with scenarios, then asked to determine which code would be assigned	45 minutes
10:30 a.m.	Break	
10:45 a.m.	Introduction to case materials (<u>module 1.6</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of case material usage Hands-on exercise organizing/editing case materials 	30 minutes
11:15 a.m.	Field tracing procedures (review and exercise) (<u>module 1.7</u>) Class discussion on the characteristics of a successful field tracer (veterans adding successful tips)	45 minutes
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	
12:45 p.m.	Gaining cooperation (<u>module 1.8</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of FI manual gaining cooperation section Group “quiz”—class provided with scenarios, then asked to determine best ways to approach gaining cooperation Role playing gaining cooperation exercise 	45 minutes
1:30 p.m.	Consent procedures and issues of confidentiality (<u>module 1.9</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of all consent forms 	30 minutes
2:00 p.m.	Introduction to the computer and the Integrated Field Management System (<u>module 1.10</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstration Hands-on practice with basic functions of the laptop	45 minutes
2:45 p.m.	Break	
3:00 p.m.	Entering Event Codes (<u>module 1.11</u>)	30 minutes

3:30 p.m.	Blaise Tutorial (<u>module 1.12</u>)	30 minutes
4:00 p.m.	Short Parent CAPI Interview (<u>module 1.13</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview/lecture/round-robin exercise 	60 minutes
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.	Study hall	

DAY 2		
TIME	ACTIVITY	LENGTH
8:30 a.m.	RETURN GRADED HOMESTUDY EXERCISES TO FIs BEFORE CLASS BEGINS Questions & answer session (module 2.0) (Trainers review any concepts from the previous day that raised questions/confusion)	15 minutes
8:45 a.m.	Review of assessment bag materials (module 2.1)	30 minutes
9:15 a.m.	Interviewing young children (module 2.2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture (including mandatory reporting procedures) Class discussion of challenges faced and overcome when interviewing/assessing young children 	30 minutes
9:45 a.m.	Brief overview of cognitive child assessment instruments (module 2.3)	30 minutes
10:15 a.m.	Break	
10:30 a.m.	Cognitive child assessments (module 2.4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language and literacy lecture Round robin exercise 	105 minutes
12:15 p.m.	Lunch	
1:00 p.m.	Cognitive child assessments continued (module 2.4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Math lecture Round robin exercise Discussion/Questions—cognitive child assessment 	120 minutes
3:00 p.m.	Break	
3:15 p.m.	Practice with cognitive child assessments (module 2.5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paired mock exercise 	105 minutes
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.	Study hall – Most FIs will need to practice child assessments	

DAY 3		
TIME	ACTIVITY	LENGTH
8:30 a.m.	Questions and answers (<u>module 3.0</u>) (Trainers review any concepts from the previous day that raised questions/confusion)	15 minutes
8:45 a.m.	Gross Motor Skills (<u>module 3.1</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture Round-robin exercise Discussion 	75 minutes
10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:15 a.m.	Video of child assessment with 5-year-old child (<u>module 3.2</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion/questions 	75 minutes
11:30 a.m.	Overview of School Study component (<u>module 3.3</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose for teacher contact FI role in gaining consent, capturing accurate contact information, and processing consent form properly 	30 minutes
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	
12:45 p.m.	Hands-on practice with paired mock parent interview and child assessment using laptops (<u>module 3.4</u>)	135 minutes
3:00 p.m.	Break	
3:15 p.m.	CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES Station 1: Cognitive child assessment	105 minutes
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.	Study hall CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES Station 1: Cognitive child assessment Station 4: Gross motor skills assessment	

DAY 4		
TIME	ACTIVITY	LENGTH
8:30 a.m.	Questions and answers (<u>module 4.0</u>) (Trainers review any concepts from the previous day that raised questions/confusion)	15 minutes
8:45 a.m.	Administrative procedures (<u>module 4.1</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-mail training and ePT&E Training (FIs fill out travel ePT&E) 	75 minutes
10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:15 a.m.	Transmission overview and review (<u>module 4.2</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture/demonstration 	30 minutes
10:45 a.m.	Case assignment folder materials review (<u>module 4.3</u>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and explain contents of case folder materials with class Explain when to use bar codes on forms 	30 minutes
11:15 a.m.	Question and answer session, additional practice (<u>module 4.4</u>)	30 minutes
11:45 p.m.	Lunch	
12:30 p.m.	CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES Station 1: Cognitive child assessments Station 2: Event Codes Station 3: Tracing Station 4: Gross Motor Skills	150 minutes
3:00 p.m.	Break (Certification scoring by training staff)	
3:30 p.m.	Wrap-up and dismiss	90 minutes

Attachment 2
ECLS-B K-1 Field Test Permission to Contact Teacher Form

PERMISSION TO CONTACT CHILD'S TEACHER IN THE ECLS-B FIELD TEST

As part of the ECLS-B, teachers of children in the field test will be asked to complete a questionnaire. We are asking you to let us contact your child's teacher. Your child's teacher will be asked about the education they give, how they get along with your child, how your child learns and behaves, parental involvement, and their background and beliefs about teaching children.

RTI will send the signed form along with a letter and questionnaire to your child's teacher. That letter will describe the field test to the teacher and share that you said it was okay for RTI to ask them questions about your child. The questionnaire will take about 20 minutes to complete.

Any information collected during the study is private and will be kept private to the fullest extent allowed by law. We will let your child's teacher know that you gave us their name and information on how to contact them and that you gave your permission for them to answer

questions about your child. None of the information you give us will be given to your child's teacher. Also, no information given by your child's teacher will be given to you. We are required by law to report any child abuse or neglect we may hear about or see.

Permission for this part of the study is completely voluntary. You may choose to give us permission for this part of the study or not. No penalties or loss of benefits will come if you choose not to give permission. Even if you agree, your child's teacher does not have to take part. Your child's teacher may choose not to answer any question and may stop taking part in the study at any time.

Your child's teacher will be given a \$10 gift certificate to thank them for their time.

I have read this form or had it read to me. I give the study team permission to contact my child's teacher.

NAME OF CHILD: _____
Print name of parent/guardian: _____

**AFFIX BARCODE LABEL
ON TOP 3 COPIES**

First Middle Last

Signature of Parent/guardian Date

Signature of Field Interviewer Date

All health and development information collected in ECLS-B will be kept private. The information is gathered and protected in keeping with the requirements of Federal law: The Public Health Service Act (42 USC 242k and 242m), and the National Education Statistics Act of 1994 (20 USC 9003a and 9007, as amended) authorize the collection of these data and, together with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a), protect the privacy of individually identifiable information. These laws limit the use of the data to the purposes for which it was collected -in this case, for research and statistical reports, unless the information is acquired by the Attorney General of the United States under court order to be used to investigate and prosecute acts of terrorism.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1850-0805, expiration date 8/31/2008. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 20 minutes. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this survey, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual survey, write directly to: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006.